



Amtrak California
A partnership of Caltrans and Amtrak®

making tracks

Vol.16, No. 2 Spring 2006

Spanish Language Amtrak.com

Amtrak now has a Spanish-language version of its website.



Spanish speaking Amtrak travelers can now make complete reservations and access Amtrak's on-line information system, including routes, schedules, fares and special offers, in Spanish by logging onto Espanol.Amtrak.com or by clicking the "En Espanol" button on the Amtrak home page – Amtrak.com.

In addition, Amtrak provides telephone customer service in Spanish, available at the toll-free number, 1-800-USA-RAIL.

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Big Strawberry Festival in Oxnard

The 23rd Annual California Strawberry Festival will be held May 20 and 21 at Strawberry Meadows of College Park, 2350 S. Rose Avenue in Oxnard. Join the fun and enjoy strawberry foods, an all-new Strawberry Promenade, live concerts, "Strawberryland For Kids" fun zone, Strawberry Hill Climbing Wall and Bungee Jump, strawberry contests and an arts and crafts show. Berry delicacies abound, including kabobs, pizza, shortcake, chocolate dipped and even strawberry beer at 50 food and beverage booths.

Ride Pacific Surfliner trains to the Strawberry Festival in Oxnard from San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Ventura, and from Los Angeles, as well as from San Diego and

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Stockton Asparagus Festival

Always a popular Central Valley event, the Asparagus Festival will be held on the Stockton Waterfront in Downtown Stockton April 21-23. The festival is open from 10 am to 7 pm and offers a number of activities, including the Mayor's Celebrity Spear Throwing Contest, Deep Fried Eating Competition and Great Spear-it Run, a run, jog or walk along the Stockton waterfront. Entertainers include Sha Na Na, Aja Vu & Eddie Money, and the Gregg Rolie Band. Last year nearly 85,000 attended the festival and consumed 40,000 pounds of local asparagus. Amtrak California's San Joaquin trains serve Stockton with six northbound and six southbound trains each day. Special free shuttles will operate on Saturday and Sunday, April 22 and 23, to and from the Stockton Amtrak and Stockton ACE stations and the Festival site.



Strawberry Festival

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Orange County to the Festival. Shuttles meet the trains at the Oxnard Transportation Center to take passengers directly to the Festival. And during the weekend, kids ride free on Pacific Surfliner trains to and from the Festival (Oxnard Station). For reservations and more information, visit Amtrak.com or call 1-800-USA-RAIL and refer to promotion code V387. Festival hours are 10:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. General Admission is \$12, seniors and active military and dependents with ID is \$8, children 5-12 pay \$5 and kids 4 years and under are free.



Connect to LAX

Fly Away Bus Service now provides convenient non-stop service between Los Angeles Union Station and Los Angeles International Airport. Special blue Fly Away buses operate every 30 minutes between 5:00 am and 1:00 am and hourly thereafter. The bus stop at Union Station is located at the Patsouras Bus Plaza on the east side of the terminal. Adult fare on the bus is \$3.50 one-way and \$6 roundtrip. Tickets are sold at the bus stop.

California State Rail Plan Released

California Department of Transportation has recently issued the California State Rail Plan 2005-06 to 2015-16. The passenger rail element of the Rail Plan reviews the current operations of the three State-supported intercity rail passenger routes (Pacific Surfliner, San Joaquin and Capitol Corridor), and outlines ten-year plans for capital improvements and service expansions. The freight element of the Rail Plan is an overview of the State rail system, looking at commodities and volumes of freight moving in and out of the State.

The Rail Plan is available on the Internet at <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/rail/pubs/reports.htm>. Printed and electronic copies on a CD are available at: Rail Plan, MS 74, California Department of Transportation, P.O. Box 942874, Sacramento, CA 94274-0001

Visit Solana Beach

Solana Beach is the perfect destination if you want to enjoy sunny beaches, interesting shops and fine dining. Cedros Design District, adjacent to the Amtrak Station in the heart of the city, offers shopping at designer boutiques, art galleries, and dining at fine restaurants or casual cafes.

Summers are warm and winters are mild, which lures the visitor to the beaches. At Tide Beach Park you can explore tide pools and enjoy excellent snorkeling. Fletcher Cove is a cobble-stoned beach with majestic bluffs and hidden coves. Surfers and body boarders are attracted to the roll of the waves, while the beach offers the perfect location for volleyball, shuffleboard, basketball and picnicking. A tree-lined trail along the coast provides enjoyable walking or bicycling.

A Pacific Surfliner Train pulls into the Solana Beach station.



Solana Beach is a regular stop on Amtrak California's Pacific Surfliner trains with 11 weekday trains and 12 on Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays, both northbound and southbound. On the train, Solana Beach is about 30 minutes north of San Diego and 15 minutes south of Oceanside. For fare and schedule information, call Amtrak at 1-800-USA-RAIL or visit www.amtrak.com.



New Motorcoach Connection Extended to North State and Southern Oregon

The popular Thruway Motorcoach Connection from San Joaquin trains in Sacramento to Northern California destinations will be extended, starting April 24, further north in California and to Southern Oregon. One stop in Oregon will be in Ashland, site of the annual Summer Shakespeare Festival.

One roundtrip train each day, San Joaquin northbound train 701 and southbound train 704, will connect with the new Thruway service. New motorcoach service will extend beyond Redding to serve Dunsmuir, Mt. Shasta, Weed and Yreka in California, and Ashland and

Medford, Oregon. The Thruway motorcoach will continue to serve Marysville, Oroville, Chico, Corning, Red Bluff and Redding.

New stops are located at City Hall in Dunsmuir; the Centennial Park bus stop in Mt. Shasta; Ray's Food Place at the intersection of Main Street (Business Route 5) and Highway 97 in Weed; Denny's Restaurant at Main and Miner Streets in Yreka; Safeway Store on Siskiyou Avenue (across from Southern Oregon University) in Ashland; and, the Rogue River Transit Center on Front Street in Medford.

Walking Tour of San Juan Capistrano

When you step from your Pacific Surfliner train at San Juan Capistrano Amtrak Station, you are in the center of the city's interesting and historic downtown. And all the buildings, sites and artifacts can be discovered on an easy walking tour.

Stop by the information booth on the station platform and pick up a walking tour brochure for a self-guided walking tour. Or, join the guided San Juan Architecture Walking Tour, which leaves from this location at 10:00 am every Saturday. A historic tour of the Los Rios Historic District leaves from the information booth on Sundays at 1:00 pm. A special historic building tour will be conducted on Saturday, May 6, from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm to celebrate Historic Preservation Week. Tickets for the walk may be obtained at the information booth.

Before leaving the station, take a look around. The red brick, dome topped station was built in 1894 and is the oldest Mission Revival style railroad station in Southern California.

If you're going to walk on your own, don't miss Mission San Juan Capistrano and the Los Rios Historic District.

When you leave the station, walk up Verdugo and turn left on Camino Capistrano. You will soon come to Mission San Juan Capistrano, founded November 1, 1776 and the seventh of the California missions. It occupies 10 acres, including a beautiful, not to be missed, central courtyard. Of special interest is Serra Chapel, one of the oldest buildings in California, the ruins of the Great Stone Church, museum rooms and displays. You can take a self-guided tour or meet a docent at the front entrance on Saturdays after 12:00 noon.

Return to the area near the Amtrak Station and cross the tracks. You will be in the Los Rios Historic District. There are 31 historic structures, which line both sides of Los Rios Street between Del Obispo and Mission Streets. It is the oldest neighborhood in California and includes three adobe homes built in 1794. Some are open to the public, including the O'Neill Museum, home to the San Juan Capistrano Historical Society. Just north of the O'Neill Museum, on Los Rios Street, you will find fine dining at the Tea House and Ramos House Café as well as many interesting shops.



Bougenvilla at Mission San Juan Capistrano.



Visible from the train platform by the ticket office, this is a replica of the old stone church that collapsed 3 years after it was built in the seventeen hundreds. Photo by Richard Clinton

New Adventure at Six Flags Marine World



Six Flags Marine World offers entertainment for the whole family. Celebrating its 45th Anniversary, the 140-acre theme park is filled with marine life, wildlife, breath-taking rides and spectacular shows. The newest adventure, slated to open in late April or early May, is Tava's Jungleland, which includes seven family rides, a giant treehouse adventure and live animal interaction, including lorikeets, macaws, porcupines and camels.

The Jungleland includes Congo Queen, Nairobi's Look-Out Balloons, Tava's Elephant Parade, Monkey Around, Safari Jeep Tours, Frog Hopper, Safari River Journey, Splashwater Oasis and Treehouse Play Structure. And, an all-new Splashtime Show features Shouka, the killer whale, and Merlin, an Atlantic bottlenose dolphin.

The best way to reach Six Flags Marine World is aboard the Amtrak California San Joaquin. Take San Joaquin train #711 to Martinez, arriving at 10:00 am, and connect with an Amtrak Thruway Motorcoach directly to Six Flag Marine World's Main Gate. Depart from the Main Gate aboard the Motorcoach at 5:15 pm to connect with southbound train #718, leaving Martinez at 6:40 pm.

Now, here is the best part. Purchase your admission tickets for Six Flags Marine World from Amtrak when you buy your train ticket and you will save 50% off the gate price for adults and children over 48 inches in height. Save 16% off the gate rate for children under 48 inches in height. Children under 2 years are free. For complete information on San Joaquin schedules and fares, and for the reduced Park admission, call Amtrak at 1-800-USA-RAIL and ask for an agent and refer to city code ZMW. Or you can visit www.amtrak.com. To verify days of operation and operating hours at Six Flags Marine World, call the theme park at 707-644-4000 or visit www.sixflags.com.



Vertical Velocity

Sun City Served by San Joaquins

Starting Monday, April 24, Sun City will have direct service to and from two daily San Joaquin trains in Bakersfield.

Amtrak Thruway Motorcoach Connections now serving Riverside, Moreno Valley, Perris and Hemet will stop in Sun City at the CL Travel Offices, 26908 Cherry Hill Blvd. Enroute to the trains in Bakersfield, the motorcoaches will pick up passengers in Sun City at 7:40 am and 12:10 pm. Returning to Sun City, motorcoaches arrive at

4:55 pm and 8:50 pm. Northbound from Bakersfield San Joaquin trains make several stops in the San Joaquin Valley, including Fresno, Merced and Stockton, and then travel to Oakland via Antioch, Martinez, Richmond and Emeryville (a connection point for San Francisco.)

For full schedule, route and fare information, passengers should call Amtrak at 1-800-USA-RAIL or visit www.amtrak.com.

Coalinga Connection

Coalinga residents now have a convenient connection to Amtrak California San Joaquin trains in Fresno. Coalinga Transit will provide one roundtrip a day Monday through Saturday between bus service stations in Coalinga and the Amtrak Fresno Station.

The Transit bus will leave from Coalinga at 8:00 am and arrive at the Fresno Amtrak Station at 10:58 am, in time to connect with southbound San Joaquin train 712, which departs Fresno at 11:30 am, and northbound San Joaquin train 713, which departs at 12:20 pm.

To catch the Transit bus back to Coalinga, passengers should take northbound San Joaquin train 713 or southbound train 714. The bus leaves Fresno at 3:10 pm and arrives in Coalinga at 5:45 pm.

San Joaquin Service for Elk Grove

Amtrak Thruway Motorcoach service between Elk Grove and San Joaquin trains in Stockton begins April 24. There will be three daily southbound motorcoaches to connect with San Joaquin trains and four daily northbound motorcoaches returning Elk Grove passengers from trains. The Elk Grove motorcoach stop is located on Harbor Point Drive at Renwick Avenue, across from McDonald's. The Apple Computer Campus is one block east on Laguna Blvd.



Red Hat Ladies Take the Train

More than 300 members of the Red Hat Society rode Amtrak California's Pacific Surfliner train from San Diego, Orange County and Los Angeles to Santa Barbara for a day of fun and socializing. Led by Sue Ellen Cooper, who founded the Society in Fullerton in 1998, the group was greeted at the Amtrak Station by Santa Barbara Mayor Marty Blum. It was the first Red Hat Society visit by train to Santa Barbara for a day of sightseeing and dining. The organization includes chapters in the United States and more than 30 countries around the world. Members are women over the age of 50 who wear red hats and usually dress in purple. On the Pacific Surfliner train trip, 61 members boarded in San Diego, 29 in Oceanside, 54 in Anaheim, 102 in Fullerton and 60 in Los Angeles.



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